

REMARKS

Status of the claims:

With the above amendments, claims 6 and 7 have been added. No new matter has been added by way of the above amendments. Support for new claims 6 and 7 can be found at pages 9 and 11, respectively. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Rejections under 35 USC §103

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ingram '191 (EP 0 118 191).

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '593 (JP 10-072593).

These rejections are traversed for the following reasons.

Present Invention

The present invention is characterized by including the particle group obtained by spray-drying a slurry and is unexpectedly improved in view of the high solubility. A surfactant may be carried on the particle group.

Disclosure of Ingram '191

Ingram '191 discloses in an Example that a detergent and a specified polyol are carried on fiber of nylon. A sheet of

detergent can be produced through solidification of the polyol. A substrate is provided on a single side of the sheet. The substrate may be water soluble as shown at page 24, lines 13 to 22.

Disclosure of JP '593

JP '593 discloses a bleach having a water-soluble substrate on both sides thereof. JP '593 fails to disclose or suggest anything about the particle group obtained by spray drying a slurry.

Removal of the Rejection over Ingram '191

Ingram '191 fails to disclose or suggest a particle group obtained by spray-drying a slurry. Ingram '191 fails to disclose or suggest water-soluble substrates provided on both sides of the laundry layer. Accordingly, Applicants assert that the Examiner has failed to make out a *prima facie* case of obviousness with regard to the 35 USC §103(a) rejection over Ingram '191. Three criteria must be met to make out a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

- 1) There must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings.
- 2) There must be a reasonable expectation of success.
- 3) The prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations.

See MPEP §2142 and *In re Vaeck*, 20 USPQ2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991). In particular, the Examiner has failed to meet the third element to make a *prima facie* obviousness rejection. Ingram '191 fails to disclose or suggest a water-soluble substrate provided on both sides of the laundry layer as is claimed in independent claim 1. Accordingly, Ingram '191 cannot render obvious the instant invention because Ingram '191 fails to disclose the elements of the instant invention. Withdrawal of the rejection is warranted and respectfully requested.

Removal of the Rejection over JP '593

The instant invention employs spray-drying a slurry containing at least one member selected from the group consisting of a water-soluble inorganic material, a water-insoluble or water-sparingly-soluble inorganic material and a water-soluble organic material. Spray-drying the slurry results in unexpectedly advantageous characteristics such as in solubility over non-spray-dried slurries. Spray-drying allows the slurry to be uniformly distributed to increase the desired feature of the invention. Moreover, spray-drying leads to distinct differences at the point where the detergent layer includes the particle group obtained by spray-drying making it more water-soluble more rapidly. Thus, there are physical differences between the claimed invention and

the invention of JP '593. Accordingly, because JP '593 mentions nothing of spray-drying or the advantageous features obtained therefrom, JP '593 cannot render obvious the instant invention. Withdrawal of the rejection is warranted and respectfully requested.

With the above remarks and amendments, it is believed that the claims, as they now stand, define patentable subject matter such that passage of the instant invention to allowance is warranted. A Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant(s) respectfully petition(s) for a two (2) month extension of time for filing a reply in connection with the present application, and the required fee of \$420.00 is attached hereto.

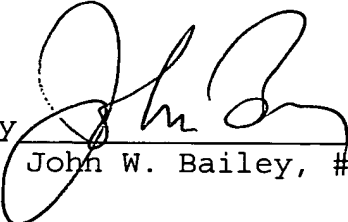
Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact T. Benjamin Schroeder (Reg. No. 50,990) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Appl. No. 09/980,203

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 

John W. Bailey, #32,881

BS
JWB/TBS/jmb/mua
0425-0865P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000

(Rev. 09/30/03)